Reviewing the Monopoly Status of VSNL

2591. SHRI YERRA NARAYANASWAMY: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to review the monopoly status of Videsh Sanchar Nigam Ltd;

(b) whether it is a fact that VSNL is charging monopolistic rates for its services; and

(c) the steps proposed to make VSNL a competitive and customer-oriented organisation?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VERMA): (a) Sir, there is no proposal to review the monopoly status till the year 2004.

(b) Sir, the rates for international telephone, telex and telegraph services are fixed by Government of India. Rates for value added services are fixed by VSNL and are quite competitive.

(c) VSNL has been assessed as one of the best run PSUs and is already customer oriented.

Licences for STD/ISD in Delhi

2592. SHRI O.P. KOHLI: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Department of Telecommunication has issued licences in every area of Delhi run STD/ISD services;

(b) if so, whether the operators running these telephone booths fix functioning hours arbitrarily without keeping in view the requirements and the facility of the general public;

(c) whether Government propose to fix their working hours; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VERMA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) No, Sir. Timings have been fixed by the Government. STD PCO franchisees are supposed to keep the STD PCOs open with minimum of 12 working hours from 8 A.M. to 8 P.M.

(c) and (d) Does not arise in view of reply to part (b) above.

Release of Telephone Directory in West Godavari District

2593. SHRI YERRA NARAYANASWAMY: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of new telephone directories released in West Godavari district in Andhra Pradesh Telecom Circle in 1996-97;

(b) whether it is a fact that such directories are not easily available in West Godavari district;

(c) if so, the reasons therefor;

(d) whether a fresh directory is being planned for 1997-98 in West Godavari district in Andhra Pradesh; and

(e) if so, the schedule of printing and release of an updated directory?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VERMA): (a) No directory

has been released so far in West Godavari District during 1996-97.

(b) Sir, the subscribers are being supplied with a copy of directory and are readily available for sale also.

(c) Does not arise.

(d) Yes, Sir.

(e) An updated directory is expected to be released by 31st March, 1997 and subsequent issues of directories will be published regularly every year.

गुजरात और मध्य प्रदेश में एस०टी०डी० रूट

2594. **श्री गोपाल सिंह जी० सोलंकी:** क्या संचार मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि:

(क) गुजरात और मध्य प्रदेश में एस० टी० डी० के ऐसे रूटों का ब्यौरा क्या है, जिन पर लाईन-क्षमता अपर्याप्त है;

(ख) क्या इन राज्यों के कुछ और विदिशा मिलों में विभिन्न स्थानों पर एस० टी० डी० को अपर्याप्त लाइनों की समस्या पेश आ रही है;

(ग) यदि हां, तो इसके क्या कारण हैं; और

(घ) उक्त रूटों पर लाइनों की संख्या में वृद्धि करने हेतु क्या उपाय किये गये हैं अथवा किये जा रहे हैं?

संचार मंत्री (श्री बेनी प्रसाद वर्मा): (क) सूचना अनुपत्र में दी गयी है। **[देखिए परिशिष्ट 180, अनुपत्र सं० 56]**

(ख) से (घ) जी, हां। इन राज्यों के कुछ और विदिशा जिलों में विश्वसनीय पारेषण माध्यमों की अनुपलब्धता के कारण ओवर हेड लाइनों पर एस टी डी सुविधा प्रदान की जा रही है। ओवरहेड लाइनों की क्षमता सीमित है। इन रूटों पर विश्वसनीय माध्यम की योजना बनायी गयी है और ओवरहेड लाइनों को क्रमिक रूप से प्रतिस्थापित किया जा रहा है।

Different Rates of ISD For Peak and Non-Peak Hours

2595. SHRI V. HANUMANTHA RAO: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that ISD calls in all other countries have different rates for peak hours and non-peak hours;

(b) if so, whether Government propose to introduce such a tariff of variable rates for ISD calls; and

(c) if not, the reasons for ignoring international convention in fixing variable ISD rates?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VERMA): (a) No, Sir. However many countries do have such differential rates.

(b) Concessional rates on ISD calls are also available in India between 2300 hours and 0600 hours. The concessions are available on all days and to all countries of the world.

(c) Question does not arise in view of (b) above.

Reviewing in Policy of Private Participation in Telecommunications Sector

2596. SHRI V. HANUMANTHA RAO: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to review policies of private participation in telecommunication sector; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VERMA): (a) and (b) No such review is presently under consideration.